
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 85

AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPGROUND RESERVATIONS AT CERTAIN STATE PARKS.

SUMMARY:

By law, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner may lease state park camping sites to state residents and nonresidents. Current law limits a family to three weeks total each year at each shore park (i.e., Hammonasset and Rocky Neck).

This bill instead requires the DEEP commissioner to lease shore park camping sites:

1. to the same family for up to three weeks total from the Saturday before Memorial Day to Labor Day;
2. to the same family for additional days during this period if the family leaves the park for at least five days between leases;
3. before and after this period regardless of the family's total length of stay; or
4. that are vacant during this period on a first come, first served basis.

The bill authorizes the commissioner to adopt regulations to establish limits on the length of camping site leases. The bill's limitation is effective until June 30, 2013, or until regulations are adopted, whichever is later.

The bill also requires the commissioner to establish a pilot program for the 2013 camping season (i.e., April 16 to December 31) that allows 5% of shore park camping sites to be leased to the same family without a limitation on the number of days leased. For such sites, he may

charge a \$31 nightly fee. The commissioner must report, by February 1, 2014, to the Environment and Finance, Revenue and Bonding committees on the pilot program. The report must describe the program implementation, its impact on camping site availability, the reaction of families using the camping sites, and any recommendation for changes to the program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

BACKGROUND

Legislative History

The Senate referred the bill (File 403) to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee, which reported a substitute bill that changed the fee structure for the long-term camper pilot program, allowing the DEEP commissioner to charge a nightly fee of \$31, instead of twice the amount otherwise charged for similar camping sites. It also added a requirement that the commissioner report to the Environment and Finance, Revenue and Bonding committees on the pilot program.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 29 Nay 0 (03/23/2012)

Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 45 Nay 4 (04/20/2012)